

# Green rhapsody: Integralist silver jubilee celebrations and the maintenance of its past/present (1957-1958)<sup>1</sup>

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## RESUMO

Este artigo apresenta as celebrações do jubileu de prata integralista. Entre 1957 e 1958 os integralistas promoveram uma série de eventos em júbilo à trajetória do movimento fundado em 1932. Com o compartilhamento de sua cultura política, o integralismo vinculado ao Partido de Representação Popular (PRP) projetou estratégias e eventos que objetivaram a manutenção de sua presença e aderência militante. Tais investidas foram marcadas pela realização de dois eventos especiais: a) o *XVI Congresso Nacional do PRP* em Vitória – ES, em julho de 1957 e b) as *festividades dos 25 anos do Movimento Integralista* – que ocorreram durante o mês de outubro do mesmo ano. Ambas as celebrações marcaram a retomada ritualística do integralismo, fator que acentuou ainda mais a já contraditória presença integralista no período pós-guerra.

Palavras-chave: Integralismo; Partido de Representação Popular; jubileu de prata integralista.

## ABSTRACT

This article looks at the commemorations of the integralist silver jubilee. Between 1957 and 1958 the integralists promoted a series of events to celebrate the trajectory of the movement, founded in 1932. Sharing its political culture, the integralism linked to the Popular Representation Party (PRP) designed strategies and events that focused on maintaining its presence and activists. This was marked by two special events: a) the Sixteenth National Congress of the PRP in Vitória (ES) in July 1957; b) the festivities of the 25th anniversary of the integralist movement – held in October of the same year. Both celebrations marked the ritualistic resumption of integralism, a factor that further accentuated the already contradictory Integralist presence in the post-war period.

Keywords: Integralism; Popular Representation Party; Integralist silver jubilee.

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## INTEGRALISM IN PLAIN CLOTHES – RUPTURES OR CONTINUITIES?

Rio de Janeiro, 7 October 1957. All the seats in the João Caetano Theater were completely full when a black torch carried by an old person and an adolescent wearing green uniforms was carried along the walkway in the theater waiting room. It was the torch of the generation, the bastion which represented the passing of power from the generations of the movement that was commemorating its anniversary. Everyone went to see the *integralist rhapsody* sustain its rhetoric. All over the theater were sympathizers, interested people and those disaffected with Plínio Salgado, who from the top of the stage, in the fullness of his 62 years, stuck out his right arm and with his right hand extended shouted for the general catharsis of the right. More than one thousand right arms were stuck out. The chorus was in unison: three *Anauês!* The exclusive greeting of the leader! It was the commemoration that would mark the symbolic integralist return in the post-war era.

*Tribuna da Imprensa*

Rhapsody is a celebration. It can be the harbinger of novelty, the eloquent memory of the past or the exaltation of something understood as glorious. In the integralist celebrations of the post-war period, Plínio Salgado, in scenes of rhetoric and persuasion sought to mimic *rhapsodies*. His public appearances were full of *rhapsodic* theatricalizations. These involved the annunciation, the variation of themes, the intensity of speeches and for adherents catharsis, trance. Salgado, holding the integralist torch, recited poems and tracts from influent and anonymous members of the movements, all by heart, as if he were telling a prose epic. Celebrations as described in this epigraph, were always common in integralism. However, the episodes presented in this article had a redefining character for the movement.

For the entire *Estado Novo* integralism was illegal and following the end of this regime it underwent an intense political movement. However, the national and international scenario imposed a series of difficulties related to the articulation of a party which reminded people of the totalitarian doctrines recently defeated in the war. The end of the *Estado Novo* resulted in a search for a new legal structure. At that time the conditions of political association had altered. The political scenario was characterized by various minor political parties with few representatives, who in the process of democratization

acquired the right to compete for seats in the legislature and national executive. After the downfall of Vargas, political parties were recreated, parties rearticulated and in the wake of this new redemocratization there emerged a party which, though stigmatized due to its previous actions, tried to transform some of its political principles, aimed at moving it closer to the electorate which had won the right to vote. This was the party led by the former integralist leader, Plínio Salgado.

The political party cartography created by the democratic opening consolidated a new political profile. Parties emerged with very different forms, notably UDN, PSD, PTB and PCB. Alongside these large parties were the smaller ones which most of the time gravitated under the influence of the larger ones. This was the case of the PRP (*Partido de Representação Popular*), heir of the AIB (*Ação Integralista Brasileira* – Brazilian Integralist Action). Although it never reached the same size as AIB, PRP made a relevant intervention in the political process, possessing convinced activists and solid, though not very large, electoral assets.

Although it never reached the same size as AIB, PRP had a relevant impact on the political process, judging by the fact that the party was represented in 18 of Brazil's states. Politically PRP's program preached the "intransigent consecration of the democratic order, based on political party plurality and the guarantee of fundamental human rights,"<sup>2</sup> a natural adaptation of democratic programs then in force, whose objective was the keep the party name. Socially the majority of PRP activists came from two sectors: the urban middle classes and small landholders in regions of German and Italian colonization, especially from the south of Brazil. The PRP focused on anticommunism, nationalism and spiritualism, as well as defending the centralization of power.<sup>3</sup> During the first two decades of parliamentary activity (1945-65) it was one of the most controversial political groupings during that period, focusing on the behind the scene articulations in national politics.

Post-war integralism can be divided into four distinct phases: 1945-1952, the moment when the party was politically affirmed with its alliances; 1953-1957, a period of radicalization and political party autonomy, culminating with the return to integralist symbologies; 1958-1961, a period in which an institutional axis was constructed, including the participation of integralists in the JK government, and alliances with the PTB of Leonel Brizola, Lott and João Goulart; and finally the last phase (1962-1964), whose dynamics took place in a conservation realignment and active participation in the preparation of the 1964 coup.

Initially adopting a vocabulary differentiated from previous times, the *Perrepistas* (integralists linked to the PRP) presented themselves as a group which did not have any identification with fascism/totalitarianism, seeking to justify its conversion to the political party format with a rather complex explanation: for them their position on the democratic board was legitimated by the ephemeral choice they had made of distancing themselves from their past. Therefore, between 1945-55 the so-called 'new' integralist party softened its discourse, seeking to distance itself from the authoritarian label that it had presented itself to Brazilians as a possible political alternative.

Nevertheless, after the candidacy of Salgado for the presidency of Brazil in 1955, and more especially after the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of integralism in 1957, what the movement called the 'return of its dearest symbols,' the PRP came to call more attention to the current political panorama. It can be perceived how some members of the new integralist party focused on various events with the aim of reintroducing into their daily activism routines a systematic aggrandizement of the integralist rituals, symbols and adornments previously cultivated. The greeting *Anauê!*, the Sigma symbol ( $\Sigma$ ), the green military clothes, its anthem and manifestations of appreciation and subservience to the leader, Plínio Salgado, and most especially the *galinhas verdes* (green chickens), (a jocular adjective given to the integralists by the anti-fascist left, which was later incorporated as the movement's most popular symbol) would be reintroduced into the integralist imagination as relevant marks. Thus, it was only after the return of its most characteristics rituals (elements linked to AIB) that the movement became news again.

In a general form the integralist silver jubilee offered the opportunity to hold in public places the idolized calendar of integralist manifestations, inherited from the 1930s: the *Vigília da Nação* (Vigil of the Nation) – alluding to the *I National Congress of Integralism* held in 1934; shortly afterwards the *As Matinas de Abril*<sup>4</sup> (Mornings of April) – a celebration that remembered the first large integralist march in the São Paulo capital in 1933; on 7 October, *A Noite dos Tambores Silenciosos*<sup>5</sup> (Night of the Silenced Drums) which marked the *1932 Manifesto*. All of these commemorative dates were returned to in 1957-58. It needs to be considered that for integralism this time had been a jubilee period during which some episodes which could have compromised the new appearance of the movement were painted in lighter tones.

These integralists connected to the symbol return at the end of the 1950s were marked by an oscillation between two aspects: reactionaryism and

conservatism. As reactionaries their greatest characteristic was a predisposition to intransigence, an incapacity to accept changes of any nature. As conservatives, threatened by these changes, they had difficulties in flexibilizing many of their proposals, precisely because they did not correspond to current demands.

A relevant element for the discussion is the role that *Perrepista* integralism played during the period studied. From 1945, when the *Partido de Representação Popular* (a corollary of *Ação Integralista Brasileira*) was created, until 1955, when Plínio Salgado ran for president of Brazil and obtained more than 700,000 votes, the *Perrepista* posture was mediated by a progressive return to the actions and radical discourse that had previously characterized integralism. The image that integralism wanted to construct in terms of public opinion, sometimes eased and sometimes accentuating the debate with its detractors, can be exemplified in the way the activists came to sell their self-image, migrating from an egocentric posture (only integralism can save) to another one that is perhaps more malleable (integralism can save with the help of others, once nationalism, anti-communism and the integralist past were respected).

1957 became paradigmatic for integralism, since after the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of its creation the party's intellectuals examined the history of the movement in order to return to many of its previous adornments and allegories. Here we describe as intellectuals of the integralist movement names which in some way were linked to the renewal of its ideology, some fellow members of the PRP, a few integralists from the 1930s and some representatives of the *Águias Brancas*, the integralist youth movement. This re-appropriation is the culmination of a broader process that intensified after 1953 with the creation of a period marked by the political party autonomy of PRP; the creation of extra-party entities linked to the movement (such as the Confederation of Youth Cultural Centers and the Brazilian Peasant Workers Union – *União Operária Camponesa Brasileira* –, amongst others); followed by relevant episodes such as the candidacy of Salgado for the government of RS in 1954 and for the presidency of Brazil at the end of 1955. The return of integralist rituals and their corollaries can only be understood if mediated by these events.

Also relevant is the fact that the activist base and some of the movement's intellectuals demonstrated great dissatisfaction with the direction of the party, going as far as to complain about the lack of its own identity. Thus, the festivities for the silver jubilee, as well as the answers to the accusations of the

large newspapers, provided the theme for a campaign to revalorize integralism. The celebration was not fed only with public questions (the popular festivities), but also the materiality expressed in the selling of its products. The purchase of souvenirs awoke in sympathizers the maintenance of its memory and the feeling of belonging to integralism, which stimulated the daily permanence of this material culture. While the national press positioned itself against the reappearance of integralist rituals, the integralist print media, in turn, used significant space for the propagation of its doctrine and the selling of its products.

Strategies for expanding activists also became more sophisticated, which encouraged integralists to create in the space of a few years a commemorative calendar which included popular festivals, historic simulations, the creation of new bodies linked to the movement, as well as the production of a varied series of products which bore the integralist brand. From matchboxes to molds for jelly, sweets and cakes, from cigarettes to broaches, passing through china and fans, the outcome of the products was extremely varied.

Figure 1 – The holding of a raffle. Plínio Salgado at the Opening of the Historic Exhibition of Integralism, 1957.



Photo: Public Municipal Archive of Rio Claro, SP. *Acervo* Plínio Salgado.

With the purpose of promoting activities that would result in the sharing of its political culture, based on its network of sociabilities, the party advanced

in its attacks, projecting strategies and events that could allow a volte-face in its political party activities. Thus, redefining the points of attack with the posture of the 1930s, the post-war *Perrepista* integralists sought in their structuration elements that could reaffirm their ritualistic and mythic apparatus and maintain their increasingly stressed opposition to communism, overvaluing its adornments, rites and symbols as the driving force for its political path.

In this way the temporal delimitation of the proposed theme (1957-1958) is justified as this period represents the peak of a posture that had been developed for several years and which reached its most polished form at the end of the 1950s. In light of this panorama we can grasp the mechanisms used by integralism after 1957, its symbolic meanings and its insertion in society at that time, highlighting elements that acted as mediators between various times, spaces and memories.

#### COMMEMORATION AS AN ARTIFACT OF MEMORY

To assist this discussion about the relations between memory and history, some historians have spoken about the deepening and the plurality with which these categories of analysis have been constructed. The dynamics of producer/reproducer/manager of memories this profusion of *restored memorialisms* have been given (especially in the last 50 years) corroborates the idea that never before has memory been so historicized and history so *memorialized*. Currently memory has become a symbolic capital: it has come to manage rights and in this way to provide scholars with a variety of foci for analysis and operational fields, in relation to which their own vocabulary can be distinguished (the so-called jargon of the social field of memory). This has allowed the interpretation of memory, cultural, social practices and their circularities, helping the historian in the search for an interpretation of their writing, narrative, statute of action, frontiers (limit and contact), as well as in their life policies: elements that generate dense conflicts.<sup>6</sup>

Far from the 'presentisms' which every now and again seduce historians, obliging them to recreate *historicist modisms* – as E. Hobsbawm notes – the discussion about the relevance and role of memory at the moment marks the choice of a considerable part of the historiography to elect as the focus of their concerns the so-called *places of memory* which are born out of and live in the sentiment that there is no spontaneous memory, for which reason it has become urgent to create archives, maintain anniversaries, organize celebrations, because these mnemonic operations are not natural. In this way

it is the defense of a *refugee memory* from privileged foci. As Pierre Nora states, “without commemorative vigilance, history will quickly sweep them away.” Thus, *places of memory* are bastions through which flows the entire choice of remembering (Nora, 1995, p.13).

In the specific case of Brazilian integralism in the post-war period, the existing relationship between those who *memorialized* the deeds of integralism and those who experienced this created memory (intellectuals of the movement and activists), always as a bulwark to be revered, can be interpreted as a timely example of the *management of pasts*. Therefore, these integralist memories are interpreted here as an act and meaning, since these integralists from the second half of the twentieth century used their social relations and their networks of sociability to look for solidity based on the crystallization of memory. The constant evolution of this memory encourages the action of *anamnesis* (the purposeful act of remembering/evoking memories) on the part of these subjects/agents, an instrument for renewing their precepts and their most significant proposals.

The social, cultural and symbolic transformations between the 1940s and 1960s required individuals, families, and new classes to look not in the past, but in the present for their legitimacy. And, as Fernando Catroga warns us in his idea of the *representification of the absent* that while, on the one hand, commemorations may appear to be a “nostalgic and regressive cult, on the other, the past is offered as an archetype of the present and the future, through which, although the rite insinuates a repetitive and cyclic conception, its final meaning is determined by the belief in the irreversibility of time” (Catroga, 2009, p.98).

The integralists, going against the natural order in force at the time and rowing upstream, insisted on the preservation of the past as the legitimator of their actions. They sought in their past the base for their achievements. These integralists used cooption strategies that included various events, collective memory rites which were consubstantiated in ever more affective ceremonies. Seeking optimistic responses to their most disturbing questions the integralists tried to answer a central question: what is the destiny of integralism, or better the vocation of integralism as a destination? The imaginary and the representations of these responses found in the death rattles of the 1950s a privileged stage to be put into practice.

The culmination of this process occurred during the commemorations of 25 years of the integralist movement, a project that aimed at renewing the *self-*



*memories of the movement*, recreating, remembering, resignifying wounds that had been painful for its member for some time. A construction that echoed, either as a chronicle of an announced future or as an outburst of a past that did not want to end. The celebrations thus appeared as the attribute of a group with relatively little expression but great political intentions, serving as a paradigmatic and catalyzing example of this integralist imagination which functioned as a source and reference for those who still found something inspirational in the movement.

The integralists operated in this manner, selecting memories which they believed to be relevant for the perpetuation of their discourse. The fact that they sought to perpetuate these memories through their own official network of communications and sociability, especially their proselytizing newspapers, is not unreasonable, since these despite their lack of penetration faithfully fulfilled a memorialistic role. The guardians of integralist memory thus exemplified the dialectic between remembering and forgetting present in the history of the movement. This is because they construct narratives, selecting the adapting what should be the optic, being remembered and forgotten, permanently working with memory.

In opposition to the *past that insists in not passing* new perspectives, approaches and ways of showing the movement. Integralism, thus, created mechanism to be reevaluated by society, using strategies that redimensioned the perception of civil society in relation to its purposes. The infamy of the provocateurs of resentment and an unfailing certainty that they no longer had a leading space were decisive for these celebrations being seen simultaneously as a lifeline for integralist discourse and a proposal for political survival. This was the manner adopted by integralism/*Perrepistas* to expand and perpetuate their memories.<sup>7</sup>

When all the members of the movement were accused of not having adequate proposals for either the present or the future, these manifestations were consubstantiated in support for the dissemination of its activities, an ordered proposal for reading the world of integralists. Its present was above all a mirror of its past. Two celebrations in especially corroborated this assertion. It was the symbiosis of these two commemorations that redefined the symbolic character of the integralist movement after 1957.

## THE VITÓRIA'S CONGRESS AND THE CELEBRATIONS OF THE INTEGRALIST SILVER JUBILEE

At the moment when various sectors in civil society remained against the memory of extremist integralism in the 1930s and when the members of the movement were accused of not possessing adequate proposals either for the present or for the future, the resumption of the precepts, rituals and adornments that were dearest to integralism was the target pursued by the movement aiming at a better acceptance of its fragmented activists. The commemorations of the integralist silver jubilee rekindled the spirits of its activist base. Sharing a reading of a private world, whose division of feelings and convictions was the center of its ideal, post-war integralism was intimately linked to this division in a period that was increasingly adverse to its presence in the political scenario. Therefore, the solidification of networks of meant that the integralists of that time could carry out a project of re-adherence on the part of the activists. At this moment the old activists came to be more important than public opinion about the movement. After all, the integralism of the PRP began to perceive that since its foundations to the present it had not found its identity. This resulted in its decision to reawaken the feverous activism of the 1930s as the lifeline for its political survival.

On the other hand, the atmosphere of redemocratization which the country was experiencing came to increasingly affirm that integralism metaphorically represented a disease that could not be hosted in the body of society. The 1955 presidential elections were an important test for the party, becoming a decisive factor for the party to enter coalitions that would help to compose political party geography at the end of 1950 and 1960. After the votes achieved by the PRP in this elections, the party sought to present itself to society in a more vehement manner, reestablishing some of its best known adornments and rituals, such as the symbology of Sigma and the integralist mystique. Thus, while at the moment of the return to democracy (the 1940s) the motto of the party was to hide its past, the end of the 1950s foreshadowed the renewal of its oldest imagery and rituals.

The promotion of these events was stimulated by an acute radicalization against the left and a surprising softening of relations with liberalism, which indicates an ambiguous posture on the part of the party. From 1957 onwards the basic purpose of the remembering of the integralist past was to trace a parallel between its activities in the 1930s, and a projection of the present and future, mirrored in a supposed previous strength. This involved dividing

common projects and anguishes. Thus, the *XVI National Congress of the PRP* in Vitória (ES) was the episode that marked the symbolic return of post-war integralism.

Held from 26-28 July 1957 in the building of the Legislative Assembly of Espírito Santo state in Vitória, this conclave would provide support to the integralist commemorations that would last for more than six months. This event inaugurated the festive timetable of the movement's commemorations. Underlying the congress was the debate about what was to be the place of integralism at that moment. At that time there emerged the light-hearted manifestations about '*curupira* integralism,' since this involved picking from the past to maintain its strength. The backward facing feet of the character from Brazilian folklore were used to joke about the integralist detractors. In reply to the ironies received, integralism strengthened its ritualistic manifestations in which various elements from the previous period (the 1930s) were appropriated.

Until 1955 the Conventions were organized aimed at objectives only related to the internal organization of the party, which most often were restricted to small domestic order disputes – such as the approval of new members and directories, the expulsion of some discontents, or even timid strategies of electoral cooption – in the second half of the decade the *Perrepista* perspective came to include a more aggressive propagandistic and doctrinaire posture. The exclusive concern with the internal organization of the party gave way to new strategies of electoral approximation.

Propaganda and rituals were aimed at consolidating activists, who were dispersed, discrete and inactive at this moment, in a scenario that was much less receptive than desired by *Perrepistas*. These factors stimulated integralism to focus convoking once again former activists. Alongside the self-evaluation of the party, various meetings were organized which aimed at preparing a doctrine and policy plan which would fulfill the function of giving the PRP a less neutral visual identity, increasingly connecting the party to the already known integralist symbology. To an important extent the *XVI National Congress* consisted of this self-evaluation in relation to the reactions of a significant part of *Perrepista* activists, concerned with the party's fragility in the political context.

Figures 2 and 3 – Covers of *A Marcha*, July 5, 1957 and May 15, 1958.



Why was this episode so significant for post-war integralism? Some decisions taken in the meeting substantially redefined the direction of its politics. The agenda included: a new doctrinal propaganda plan for the party; the multiplication of directories; its position at the national and state levels; future accomplishments; the elections in the following year (1958) and the possibility of running Plínio Salgado for the Federal Legislature. Especially notable was the announcement of PRP’s joining JK’s government, which had an enormous impact on the oldest activists, causing great deception among a significant number of the most orthodox members. Nevertheless, among the issues voted on, one deserved special attention: the return of the symbology of Sigma ( $\Sigma$ ) as the official emblem of the PRP, a proposal made by the National Political Council, an advisory board linked to the party’s National Directorate.

From 1945-1957 the official insignia of the PRP had been a bell around which was wrapped a map of Brazil which for the *Perrepistas* signified the “tinkling of new integralist generations around the country.” The proposal was enthusiastically received by the directorate who informed the party members, obeying the following protocol: Salgado asked everyone to rise, since he had in his hands a proposal that would definitely change the role of the PRP. The

formality of the leader and his serious air created enormous expectations among those present. Standing, supported by the back of the central chair on the podium, his hands shaking but upright, Plínio Salgado read the proposal out loud.<sup>8</sup> “The National Political Council recommends acceptance so that the current emblem of the party can be changed to the Sigma, symbol of a doctrine which neither time nor circumstances have extinguished.”<sup>9</sup>

Politically this act was given a special significance by the leadership of the party: at that moment the PRP once again came to identify with the greatest symbol of *Ação Integralista Brasileira*, the indelible mark of a reactionary/conservative position. The *Perrepistas* thereby assumed in an unconditional manner that their party restructuring needed this reapproximation with the symbols of the times of AIB, in order for its devoted activists to endorse its reception. The party thus sought its reaffirmation in its past. While in 1945 the PRP moved away from this past to adapt to the new directives of democracy and to flee from the uncomfortable comparison with fascism, in 1957 the appeal was different.

Integralists understood that it was necessary to look for old identifications. It is relevant that the PRP had returned to integralist rituals and adornments. Through these icons of the old movement, such as the Sigma, the hymnal, the torch (the flame of generational transition), not to mention the *green chicken*, which would be transformed into a *white eagle*,<sup>10</sup> would allow these symbols to remain present as significant elements of the political identification of the PRP. The remembering of a past understood by its adherents as exultant became a current practice, and the fusion of the symbolic elements of integralism in the 1930s with the political actions of the 1950s provided the opportunity for the (re)creation of its own rituals. At this moment the *Perrepistas* took advantage of the metaphor of transformation, the reemergence from the ashes of political ostracism, like the phoenix the mythical greek bird. This metaphor came to sustain it in a very strong fashion from the middle of this decade.

## THE CELEBRATION OF A PAST REDIVIVUS

At the end of August 1957 a timetable of festivities began to be drawn up, aiming at making the integralist jubilee well known. The suggestion of a calendar of celebrations sought to share the history of the movement, preparing

society for the return of the integralism's old clothes. This timetable coincided with the reuse of the official calendar of the movement, dating from the 1930s.

The newspaper *A Marcha*<sup>11</sup> published the activities for the *Week of 7 October*. The advertising of the *Festivities Schedule* was intense every week during September. During the first week of October a specific program was scheduled for each day. Of the events mentioned in the calendar one was given special attention: the *Historic Exhibition of Integralism*, which, according to the sources available (party sources and Carioca newspapers with a large circulation), was seen by thousands of persons (sic) in the five days it was open to the public. Held in the Assírio Saloon in the Municipal Theater of Rio de Janeiro,<sup>12</sup> this exhibition remade the historic trajectory of the movement, showing hundreds of souvenirs and more than 30 explanatory pictures about its symbolic apparatus. It is also apt to point out that for integralist sympathizers, whether or not they were linked to the PRP, the meaning of the commemoration and the exhibition about their history had a 'reforming' character, since it restituted the dispersed feeling of belonging of these individuals.

Nevertheless, the organization of the preparations for the event shows that the October 1957 commemorations were not aimed at only former militants – the green lines, as they were usually designated by their fellow members –, but also society in general. An example of this was the registration of the significant presence of people from the less privileged classes in the integralist exhibition. The organization of the *Exhibition* provide an attendance book at the entrance, in order to obtain a diagnosis of the profile of the public. It can be understood that the level of popular participation in the festivities served as a test to assess the receptivity of the PRP's proposals.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, the absence of significant marks of the history of integralism in this calendar raises questions. The date when the integralist rebellion against Guanabara Palace (the early morning of 11 May), a surprise attack which aimed to take power away from Vargas was not even remembered. It can be noted that those responsible for the festivities only permitted the remembering of events considered successful by the integralists. Rereading the propaganda material for this exhibition, what is given is the impression of complete integralist success, precisely because the failures or the contradictions of the movement are not mentioned, as if they were not part of its history. The *putsch* (rebellion), the dissidences, the fascist connections, none of this appeared,

unless as an argument made against it by its adversaries, or as a witness of how integralism had been mistreated by the opposition.<sup>14</sup>

According to data from the mainstream Brazilian press,<sup>15</sup> the leadership of the PRP, together with a large group of integralist activists, filled wherever the celebrations were held. This happened in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre and other smaller Brazilian cities. These celebrations lasted until April of the following year.<sup>16</sup> Throughout 1958 other ephemeris occurred. Always contested in the newspapers at the time, these celebrations even further attracted the attention to the old/new integralism.<sup>17</sup>

Since their institutionalization integralist rituals were vast and aimed at, in addition to the anti-communist position, propaganda to enlist new activists, the reason for which was ostentatiously publicized. Integralists marches and concentrations aimed at constituting demonstrations of the strength of the movement. Six months later the celebration of the *first integralist march*, a *natural corollary* of the festivities, was consolidated with the second most important episode in the list of celebrations during the *Jubilee*. This march inflamed the sleeping activists and was reported by the mainstream press, which saw in the event possibilities for propaganda. The remembering last three days (24, 25 and 26 April 1958), involving various moments.

In the former there was a ceremony to ‘welcome’ the ‘rising sun,’ representing the restoration of the movement. Two days later there was a recreation of a historical integralist march, followed by the official closing of the commemorations. This involved a return to the place of the march, the city of São Paulo, where a group of former supporters of Sigma joined *Perrepistas* and sympathizers in order to hold the ceremonies. Although the organizers had forecast a significant level of involvement by their sympathizers, something which the integralists did not count on provoked an embarrassing situation: due to a storm in São Paulo, the celebrations ‘welcoming the rising sun’ and the *first integralist march* had a very unfavorable result for its sympathizers.

Figure 4 – Partial view of the reenactment of the First Integralist March. SP. Apr. 1958. The integralist newspaper reported that thousands of people took place, the photography showed a few dozen.



Photo: Arquivo Público Municipal de Rio Claro – SP. Acervo Plínio Salgado.

In both commemorations the special guest did not turn up. At the exact moment when the protocol was supposed to happen, precisely at 5.30 in the morning of 24 April and again on the morning of 25 April, torrential storms drove off the small integralist contingent who, prostrated in front of the Paulista School of Medicine, sang the movement's anthem, under the attentive and sarcastic eye of the half dozen journalists covering the event. Sad coincidence for the integralists, a significant symbology for their adversaries. Present at the solemnity of 24 April were reporters from *Estado de S. Paulo*; *Correio Paulistano*; *Folha da Manhã*; *Última Hora/SP* and the São Paulo office of the Carioca newspaper *O Globo*. In addition to the newspapers, the magazines *Manchete* and *Maquis* also covered the *integralist embarrassment*, as the unsuccessful meeting came to be known. The presence of the mainstream press demonstrates that the integralist specter still interested the means of communication: 'integralism, no matter how funny it may show itself to be, is still news.' So much so that Assis Chateaubriand, referring to the episode, referred to it as "the last kick of a dying dog, which was actually not so dead."<sup>18</sup>



The commemorations were closed with a solemn session presided by Plínio Salgado and watched by hundreds of persons. It is interesting to note that until 15 April, a week before it was due to be held, the session was supposed to be held in the *Salão Nobre* of the *Associação Paulista de Futebol*, sublet from the Record radio station. However, another symptomatic episode occurred. On the eve of the event being held, the integralist plans were frustrated by the breaking of the agreement signed previously by the director of the radio station, supposedly a sympathizer of communism. He had refused, a few days before the ceremony, the request for the loan of the hall to the football association. The only thing to do was for the integralists to look for a new place to hold the event. This episode confirmed the generalized dissatisfaction of some sectors of society with the return of integralist political allegory. This opposition was not restricted to the written press. The stigma related to integralism remained its greatest adversary.

Figure 5 – Plínio Salgado talking at the ending of the commemorations of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First March.



Photo: Arquivo Público Municipal de Rio Claro – SP. Acervo Plínio Salgado.

The symbiosis of two factors collaborated to the unchaining of this campaign of declared opposition to the movement. First, the ingrained anti-Plínio feeling was still stimulated by some of his adversaries, including some media owners. Second, the emblematic figure of Luis Carlos Prestes continued

to represent a significant political force, as well as being a 'stone' in the *Plinista* path. In the direct conflict between the communists in their illegality and the integralists in a process of reformulation, the former won the round.

With the '*communist pulling of the carpet from under us*' – a phrase attributed to Salgado – it was shown that the receptivity of the integralist and PRP leader by civil society was still controversial. What occurred in São Paulo was repeated on a large-scale through the rest of the country. The episode of the cancellation of the hall of the *Associação Paulista de Futebol* illustrated the rejection that Salgado attracted to himself. The range of dissatisfaction with the integralist presence in the 'past mold' was not restricted to communists.<sup>19</sup>

The celebrations had a positive balance for integralism, since they put the movement back into the national political scenario, despite all the opposition displayed by the mainstream press. The reemergence of the integralist allegories and rituals through their ephemerides, put the movement back on the pages of the most important Brazilian newspapers. Integralism was not only news again, but came to occupy a leading role in discussions undertaken by the press, once again making itself a focus of the importance of national politics.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

All the mechanisms of activist and doctrinal action described in this article produce a question that the written sources alone cannot answer: why did the integralists return to the national political party scenario in the period studied armed with a discourse understood by non-integralists as *passé* and not as progressive, as would be expected of a group that aimed to maintain its permanence in a scenario – that it can be said *en passant* – which was contrary to groups with radical discourse and actions such as the integralists?

Integralism in the 1930s preached a sectarian nationalism, an anti-alliance posture, the maintenance of a corporative state, as well as feeding the certainty that it was the only national party that possessed the credentials to present a project to the nation, that was in its own words: 'really plausible.' By redefining (in its own way) points of shock with the posture of the 1930s, the *Perrepistas* integralists at the end of the 1950s sought in their structuration elements that would reaffirm their ritualistic and mythical apparatus. They maintained a fierce opposition to communism and concentrated on overvaluing their symbolic aspects as the driving force of their political path. The focus was to

get the attention of the old, but dissipated, unmotivated and dismantled activists.

It is relevant that in this period questions that legitimated the statutes of democracy, nationalism, political party, activism, amongst other elements that were part of redemocratization, gained importance again, which meant that the permanence of integralism in the national scenario would be questioned. Integralism was thus forced to modify its message and its doctrinaire precepts at the moment when the attention of society was directed towards the re-conquest of the civil and political rights that had been taken from it: including free political initiative, voting freedom and political party coalitions.

During its first twelve years (1945-57) the *Partido de Representação Popular* – PRP (the party of the ‘new (?) integralism’) sought to distance itself from all the precepts that could bring to mind the first integralist actions. Nevertheless, after 1957 what was previously a diluted discourse came to be the conduct of the movement, which acted from then on to encourage the remembering of the past, understood by them as ‘glorious,’ in which integralism played a leading role. It can be perceived that the symbolic vector of the integralist movement was always greater than its own political representation (*Partido de Representação Popular*), since it was less the party and more the symbolic action of the movement that actually financed this return. It was thus sought to approximate the rites, allegories, and symbols that had been used in integralism since the 1930s as a form of reaffirming the movement which had been losing ever more adepts. In this complex scenario it was possible to infer that the celebrations of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of integralism emerged as an attempt to make propaganda about the ideological/ritualistic renewal of the movement, presenting it to society as a *corpus* whose aim was permanence on the political chessboard.

In summary, the remembering of the integralist past mimicked the *rhapsodic* theatricalizations. In these adherence to the catharsis of sympathizers could be measured by the widespread dissemination that the press gave to the integralist ritualistic apparatus of 1957-58. The episodes presented in this article had a redefining character, being configured as a ‘dividing of the waters’ of integralist praxis. It can be thus noticed that the celebrations were part of the institutionalization of the symbolic practices put to the service of the civic sacralization of the movement, of its time and space – as agents and places of memory.

I hope that this article can collaborate to a greater understanding of the question, stimulating and constructing a more accurate panorama of the trajectory of the integralist ethos in the post-war period.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Part of this article is an adaptation of the first chapter of the doctoral dissertation entitled: *A Enciclopédia do Integralismo: lugar de memória e apropriação do passado (1957-1961)*, defended in August 2010, under the supervision of Prof<sup>a</sup> Dr<sup>a</sup> Marieta de Moraes Ferreira. The author is a founding member of Geint – Group of Studies of Integralism.

<sup>2</sup> PRP Program, 1945, p.1.

<sup>3</sup> See: “Suplemento da militância”, *A Marcha*, Oct. 1957, p.13.

<sup>4</sup> The commemoration of the *Matinas de Abril*, originally the first ceremony in the integralist calendar, was simultaneously held in all the integralists directories in the country, shortly before dawn. This was a significant element in the symbology of the transition of powers of the movement: the passing of experience to the youth: the new integralist generation.

<sup>5</sup> The celebration of the *Noite dos Tambores Silenciosos* occurred for the first time during the I Meridional Integralist Congress in 1935 in Blumenau (SC). Over time this ceremony came to be considered as the most important in the integralist calendar. See: SALGADO, Plínio. “A Noite dos Tambores Silenciosos”. *A Offensiva*, Rio de Janeiro, ano II, n.74, p.3, Oct. 12, 1935. Information republished in *A Marcha*, p.6, Nov. 15, 1958.

<sup>6</sup> As is taught to us in the following texts: NORA, Pierre. Entre memória e história: a problemática dos lugares. In: *Projeto História*, São Paulo, n.10, p.7-28, dez. 1993; RICOUER, Paul. *Tempo e narrativa*. v.III. Campinas (SP): Papirus, 1997, p.124; CHARTIER, Roger. *A História cultural: entre práticas e representações*. Trad. Maria Manuela Galhardo. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1990; ANSART, Pierre. *Ideologias, conflitos e poder*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1978; HALBWACHS, Maurice. *A memória coletiva*. São Paulo: Vértice, 1990; LE GOFF, Jacques. “Passado/Presente”. In: ROMANO, R. *Enciclopédia Einaudi*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1984; CATROGA, Fernando. *Os passos do homem como restolho do tempo: memória e fim do fim da História*. Coimbra: Almedina, 2009; \_\_\_\_\_. *Memória, História e Historiografia*. Coimbra: Quarteto, 2001; \_\_\_\_\_. *Ritualizações da História*. In: TORGAL, Luís Reis; MENDES, José Amado. *História da História em Portugal (Séculos XIX-XX): da historiografia à memória histórica*. Lisboa: Temas e Debates, 1998, p.221-361.

<sup>7</sup> ‘The past that did not want to pass’ became the motto of anti-integralist campaigns in response to its revitalization. See: WAINER, Samuel. *Última Hora*, p.8, Nov. 18, 1958.

<sup>8</sup> GULLO, Damiano. *A Marcha*, Aug. 7, 1957, p.6.

<sup>9</sup> “O Encontro do novo integralismo: a volta do Sigma”. *A Gazeta*, Vitória, p.6, July 29, 1957.

<sup>10</sup> The Youth Cultural Centers, publically created from 1962 onwards, constituted the largest extra-party organization created by integralism between 1945 and 1965. The centers were tied together by the Confederation of Youth Cultural Centers and carried out activities concerned with holding civic commemorations and talks about political and doctrinal subjects. The young activist integralists from the cultural centers came to be designated ‘White Eagles,’ in contrast with the jocular name of ‘green chickens’ by which they were called by their adversaries.

<sup>11</sup> A weekly publication that replaced the daily *Idade Nova* (the official party newspaper until 1951).

<sup>12</sup> The following publications were consulted: *A Marcha* and the newspapers *O Globo*, *Tribuna da Imprensa*, *Última Hora* e *A Noite*, for the commemoration week.

<sup>13</sup> See: *Caderno de Presença da Exposição Integralista*, Oct. 1957. Acervo Plínio Salgado. Arquivo H. M. Rio Claro. The presence book of the Historic Exhibition of Integralism has been little used and only a few newspaper reports at the time mentioned it. Although it is in a terrible condition, it contains valuable information about the presence of ordinary people at the festivities.

<sup>14</sup> Série de artigos intitulada “A verdade contra a mentira”. *A Marcha*, na semana da comemoração.

<sup>15</sup> In this case we analyze the newspapers *O Estado de S. Paulo*, *Correio Paulistano*, *Folha da Manhã*, *da Noite e da Tarde*, *Diário Popular*, *Diário de Notícias*, *O Jornal*, *Diário Carioca*, *Tribuna da Imprensa*, *A Notícia*, *Gazeta de Notícias*, *Jornal do Brasil*, *Última Hora*, *Diário da Noite*, *Diário de Notícias/RS* and *O Globo*.

<sup>16</sup> According to research by Gilberto Grassi Calil based on the newspaper *A Marcha*. See: CALIL, Gilberto Grassi. *Integralismo e hegemonia burguesa: a intervenção do PRP na política brasileira (1945-1965)*. Cascavel (PR): Ed. Unioeste, 2010, p.256.

<sup>17</sup> “Por água abaixo...”. *Última Hora*, p.14, Apr. 23, 1958.

<sup>18</sup> “Coisas de S. Paulo, coisas do Brasil”. A column in the corner of the page signed by Assis Chateaubriand himself. *Diário Carioca*, issue of May 1958.

<sup>19</sup> “The Solemn Session of the Silver Jubilee of the First Integralist March will have to be transferred to another place. *All because its director is a communist*. Due to the interference of Mr. Luis Carlos Prestes, the auditorium which had been reserved for our commemoration has been denied at the last minute, with the clear intention of sabotage.” *A Marcha*, July 21, 1958, central page. Emphasis added.

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